

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS ZEV YAROSLAVSKY AND
DON KNABE

June 24, 2003

Southern California faces a crisis in airport capacity, which threatens to undermine the strength of our regional economy. Over the next 25 years, SCAG has estimated that air traffic demand in Southern California will more than double, from 80 million annual passengers in 1997 to over 167 million annual passengers. A 28 percent shortfall in airport capacity is also predicted.

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is reaching its capacity limits and will be unable to handle this projected increase in airport demand, even if the current LAX expansion proposal is approved. Moreover, apart from the airport congestion itself, passengers traveling to and from LAX to outlying areas impose additional traffic burdens on our already over-burdened freeway network.

Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn has proposed to the Federal Department of Transportation that the City of Los Angeles be permitted to lease the El Toro Marine Air Base for use as a commercial airport. If enacted, this proposal would ensure that regional air traffic demand is accommodated regionally. While Orange County residents have voted to reutilize the Marine Air Base for other purposes, it is vitally

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important that the federal government consider the regional implications of the disposition of the El Toro Base and seriously evaluate the City of Los Angeles proposal.

It is highly unlikely that airport planners will be able to identify a comparable site elsewhere in the Orange County area to develop as a commercial airport. Given the size of the property, its proximity to the coastline where the bulk of the population resides, and the sizeable agricultural buffer surrounding the site, the El Toro Base is ideally suited for conversion to a commercial airport.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors send a 5-signature letter to Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, Department of Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and Federal Aviation Administration Administrator Marion Blakey supporting the City of Los Angeles proposal to lease the El Toro Marine Air Base for use as a commercial international airport, and urging that the federal government seriously consider this proposal.

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